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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 BAGHDAD 001183

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PASS TO NEA/PPD ALBERTO FERNANDEZ; EMBASSY LONDON FOR ADAM
ERELI

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TAGS: [PHUM](#) [OPRC](#) [PGOV](#) [KDEM](#) [KPAS](#) [ECPS](#) [IZ](#) [JO](#)
SUBJECT: WASAN MEDIA AND CHALDEAN DETAINEES POSSIBLY
LOCATED AT IRAQI NATIONAL POLICE DETENTION CENTER

Classified By: DEPUTY POLITICAL COUNSELOR ROBERT GILCHRIST, FOR REASONS
1.4 (B,D).

¶1. (SBU) SUMMARY: During an April 5 human rights inspection at a Ministry of Interior (MoI) detention facility, PolOff located and identified eleven journalists from the Wasan Media Company, whose arrest has been the subject of intense scrutiny by international media organizations, and four Chaldeans Christians, whose "missing" status has been of serious concern to Chaldean church officials. Post will maintain awareness of the status of all fifteen men, and press GOI to accelerate their judicial processing. END SUMMARY.

ELEVEN DETAINEES SAY THEY ARE WASAN MEDIA EMPLOYEES

¶2. (C) During a human rights inspection of the MoI 2nd Division National Police (NP) detention facility at Khadimiya, eleven men identified themselves as Wasan Media Company who were arrested from the company's office in Baghdad on February 25. (Note: Wasan Media is one of the many media companies in the Arab world owned by a Jordanian, Mohammed Ajlouni. End note.) The arrest has drawn intense international scrutiny. For example, the Committee to Protect Journalists (CPJ) -- an independent, New York-based nonprofit organization that promotes free press worldwide -- sent a letter to Prime Minister Maliki on March 28 to inquire about the status of the Wasan Media journalists. CPJ's letter, which is posted on its website, states that Brigadier General Qasim Atta al-Moussawi, spokesman for the Baghdad Security Plan, had informed CPJ that MoI had "received information that they (the journalists) work in a media company that sells films to the Al-Jazeera channel", which GOI forbids from maintaining a bureau in Iraq, and were accused of "incitement of terror".

¶3. (C) One detainee, Shaker Mahmoud Khalaf Al-Falahi (strictly protect), identified himself as the "leader" of the group and assured PolOff in English that while their treatment at the detention facility had been humane, they remain uncertain of their charges. He added that they had not seen a judge, and had been unable to contact their families. Al-Khalafi provided contact numbers for his daughter "Mais", who lives in Baghdad and Wasan Media's central office in Jordan. The eleven detainees raised their hands one-by-one to confirm they are the following individuals:

-- Shaker Mahmoud Khalaf Al-Falahi
-- Omar Luqman Mahmoud
-- Mohammed Jassim Mohammed

-- Mohammed Qassim Nuhair
-- Mohammed Luqman Mahmoud
-- Hassan Kadhum Hammed
-- Majed Youssif Mansour
-- Mohammed Kurdi Abid
-- Adnan Abdullah Abid
-- Qusai Fu'ad Obaid
-- Omar Mohammed Baseem

FOUR CHALDEAN DETAINEES LOCATED

¶4. (C) Bishop Shlemoon Wardoni (strictly protect), the Deputy Chaldean Patriarch of Baghdad had requested assistance from the Embassy in locating four Chaldean Christian men, who were guards at the Babel College of Philosophy and Theology, a Chaldean seminary in the Doura area of Baghdad. In response to a direct query, MoI officials also verified that they were holding the following individuals:

-- Khaled Lateef Zakarya Hannsh
-- Adnin Yago Gergees Danyal
-- Daood Emmanuel Daood Moshy
-- Duraid Hikmat Todya Toma

¶5. (C) From a holding cell containing approximately 200 men, four men responded to each of these names as a MoI police officer called them out. From the entrance of the cell, the four men told PolOff that they were arrested when they were guarding the Babel College of Philosophy and Theology. Breaking into tears, one man said that they had been in the detention center for fourteen days, and still had not seen a judge.

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¶6. (C) PolOff informed Bishop Shlemoon Wardoni (strictly protect) of this discovery on April 5. The Bishop said that he would like to see the men released and expressed his gratitude for the Embassy's continued engagement on behalf of the four detainees.

COMMENT

¶7. (C) The accounts of these detainees appear highly credible. PolOff only gave the names of the fifteen men to MoI, without providing context on the query. The timeframes and details the men provided are fully consistent with the details of each of their two, respective cases. Post will continue to maintain awareness on the detainees' status and press GOI to have their cases reviewed by judges as soon as possible. END COMMENT.
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